



For Immediate Release:

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Media Contact:

David Neville

Tobacco Prevention and Control Program

(o) 801-538-6917 (c) 801-386-1316

News Release

Ads Tell Dangers of Drifting Secondhand Smoke *Residents in Housing Complexes Can't Escape It*

(SALT LAKE CITY) – For the first time ever, the Utah Department of Health's (UDOH) Tobacco Prevention and Control Program (TPCP) is launching a new television and radio campaign that focuses on the dangers of secondhand smoke (SHS) in Multi-Unit Housing.

The ads are based on the premise that we all breathe the same air, especially in housing complexes, and we need to share the responsibility of cleaning it up. Whether through creating a smoke-free policy in units or quitting smoking, smoke-free multi-unit housing is a growing national trend. According to former U.S. Surgeon General Richard Carmona, "Policies creating completely smoke-free environments are the most economical and efficient approaches to providing this protection [from SHS]."

"We want managers and tenants alike to see that secondhand smoke can and does drift from one housing unit to another through shared ventilation systems, cracks in floors or walls, or open windows," said David Neville, spokesperson, UDOH TPCP. "There is no safe level of secondhand smoke, which is why smoke-free policies are so important."

Secondhand smoke is the third leading cause of preventable disease in the U.S. Each year, approximately 50,000 people die as a result of SHS exposure. Additionally, children exposed to SHS have an increased risk for asthma, bronchitis, sudden infant death syndrome, ear infections, and more.

As stated in the ads, "Secondhand smoke has no boundaries...Being exposed to secondhand smoke is dangerous."

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Resources for Tenants:

- **Do the Research.** Ask if all housing units are smoke-free units. Bordering neighbors above, below, or on the side can impact your unit. Check out Utah's Smoke-free Apartment and Condominium Directory for quick access to smoke-free residences at www.TobaccoFreeUtah.org/aptcondoguide-lom.htm
- **Ask About Enforcement.** Ask how the complex enforces its smoke-free policy. Do they fine violators, provide cessation materials, or enforce with eviction if necessary?
- **Get it in Writing.** If the property is listed as smoke-free, be sure that the lease agreement contains a statement to that effect.

Resources for Managers:

- **Smoke-free is Legal.** Utah law allows you to prohibit smoking in individual units, on the premises, or both. You do not have to allow smoking. Smoking is not protected. You can legally require units to be smoke-free.
- **Smoke-free Saves Money.** From lower cleaning costs, fewer burn holes in carpets and upholstery, to reduced time repainting walls and sterilizing units, being smoke-free reduces your economic burden.
- **Smoke-free Saves Time.** Being smoke-free saves time and energy in dealing with complaints or possible court action from victims of drifting secondhand smoke.

Make quitting easier by calling the Utah Tobacco Quit Line at 1.888.567.TRUTH or visiting www.UtahQuitNet.com.

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The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.